

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONTRE 00033 062203Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 EB-07

COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /077 W

-----062210Z 096406 /64

R 062145Z JAN 77

FM AMCONSUL MONTREAL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8451

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMCONSUL QUEBEC

UNCLAS MONTREAL 33

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, CA

SUBJ: COMBUSTION ENGINEERING TO MOVE HEAD OFFICE DUE TO LANGUAGE
PROBLEMS

1. MONTREAL GAZETTE TODAY REPORTS THAT COMBUSTION ENGINEERING
SUPERHEATER, LTD. HAS DECIDED TO MOVE MONTREAL HEAD OFFICE
OPERATIONS, EMPLOYING FROM 300-400 PEOPLE, TO ONTARIO BECAUSE
OF "RESTRICTIVE LANGUAGE POLICIES ON PART OF QUEBEC GOVERNMENT".
DECISION ON NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES TO REMAIN IN MONTREAL, IF ANY,
WILL BE MADE BEFORE JANUARY 21ST, ACCORDING TO COMPANY SPOKES-
MAN. COMPANY'S PLANT IN DRUMMONDSVILLE, SOUTH OF MONTREAL,
WHICH EMPLOYS 700 PEOPLE, WILL NOT BE AFFECTED.

2. SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF COMBUSTION ENGINEERING SAID THAT
TWO FACTORS MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO RECRUIT ENGINEERING TALENT AND
WERE THEREFORE IMPORTANT IN COMPANY'S DECISION TO MOVE. PRO-
VINCIAL REGULATIONS REQUIRE THAT ANY ENGINEER COMING TO QUEBEC
GAIN WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF FRENCH WITHIN A YEAR, AND PROPOSED
FREEZE ON ENGLISH SCHOOL SYSTEM WILL REQUIRE FUTURE IMMIGRANTS
TO QUEBEC TO SEND CHILDREN TO FRENCH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS. BOTH
OF THESE WERE SEEN AS REDUCING THE FLOW OF PEOPLE WILLING TO
IMMIGRATE TO QUEBEC.

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3. COMPANY SPOKESMAN SAID THAT PROPOSED MOVE HAS BEEN UNDER
STUDY FOR SOME TIME AND THAT IT WAS IN NO WAY RELATED TO
ELECTION OF PQ GOVERNMENT NOVEMBER 15TH.

4. COMMENT: WHILE MANY COMPANIES HAVE COMPLAINED ABOUT
DIFFICULTIES CAUSED BY LANGUAGE REGULATIONS IN QUEBEC, FEW

HAVE OPENLY POINTED TO LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES AS REASON FOR
MOVE. RECENT DECISION OF DR. CAMILLE LAURIN, THE MINISTER
RESPONSIBLE FOR CULTURAL AFFAIRS, TO SUSPEND PRESENT
FRANCIZATION PROGRAM FOR PRIVATE ENTERPRISE, OSTENSIBLY TO
MAKE NEW PROGRAM MORE RIGOROUS, HAS INJECTED NEW UNCERTAINTY
INTO COMPANY OPERATIONS. COMPANIES HAD ADJUSTED TO PREVIOUS
REQUIREMENTS, BUT PRESUMABLY WILL NOW HAVE TO CHANGE THEIR
TIME SCHEDULES IN ORDER TO SPEED INTRODUCTION OF FRENCH INTO
BUSINESS ONCE THE NEW REGULATIONS ARE ANNOUNCED.
HARPER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, BUSINESS FIRMS, TRANSFER OF OFFICES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 06-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MONTRE00033
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770006-0367
Format: TEL
From: MONTREAL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770175/aaaacnvf.tel
Line Count: 72
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3772b8dc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3652806
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COMBUSTION ENGINEERING TO MOVE HEAD OFFICE DUE TO LANGUAGE PROBLEMS
TAGS: ECON, CA, COMBUSTION ENGINEERING SUPERHEATER
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3772b8dc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009